XXXI. *Botanical Deſcription of the* Benjamin Tree *of* Sumatra. *By* Jonas Dryander, *M. A. Libr. R. S. and Member of the Royal Academy of Sciences at* Stockholm; *communicated by Sir* Joſeph Banks, *Bart. P. R. S.*

Read May 17, 1787.

THOUGH GARCIAS AB HORTO, GRIM, and SYLVIUS, were acquainted with the real tree from which Benjamin or Benzoin is collected, their deſcriptions of it are ſo imperfect and inſufficient for its botanical determination, that ſucceeding botaniſts have fallen into many errors concerning it; and it is remarkable, that although this drug was always imported from the Eaſt-Indies, moſt of the later writers on the Materia Medica have conceived it to be collected from a ſpecies of Laurus, native of Virginia, to which, from this erroneous ſuppoſition, they have given the trivial name of Benzoin. This miſtake ſeems to have originated with Mr. RAY, who in his Hiſtoria Plantarum, Vol. II. p. 1845. at the end of his account of the Arbor Benivifera of GARCIAS, ſays: "Ad nos "ſcripſit D. TANCREDUS ROBINSON Arborem reſiniferam odo-"ratam foliis citrinis prædictæ haud abſimilem tranſmiſſam "fuiſſe e Virginia a D. BANISTER, ad illuſtriſſimum Præ-"ſulem D. HENR. COMPTON, in cujus inſtructiſſimo horto "culta eſt.——Arbor iſta Virginiana Citrii, vel Limonii foliis "Benzoinum fundens, in horto reverendiſſimi Epiſcopi culta."

This error was detected by LINNÆUS, but another was ſubſtituted by him in its place; for in his Mantiſſa Plantarum

Altera,

Altera, he tells us, that Benjamin is furniſhed by a ſhrub deſcribed there under the name of Croton Benzoe, and afterwards in the Supplementum Plantarum, deſcribes again the ſame plant, under the name of Terminalia Benzoin. M. JACQUIN, who had been informed that this ſhrub was called by the French *Bienjoint*, ſuppoſes, with reaſon, that the ſimilar ſound of that word with *Benjoin*, the French name for Benjamin, may have occaſioned this miſtake *.

Since that period Dr. HOUTTUYN has deſcribed the Benjamin Tree of Sumatra; but for want of good ſpecimens has been ſo unfortunate as to miſtake the genus to which it belongs. It is hoped, therefore, that the following deſcription and annexed figure (ſee Tab. XII.) may not be unworthy a place in the Philoſophical Tranſactions; they are made from dried ſpecimens procured from Sumatra by Mr. MARSDEN, F. R. S. at the requeſt of Sir JOSEPH BANKS, Bart. P. R. S. and clearly prove that this tree agrees in the parts of fructification with the Styrax of LINNÆUS.

STYRAX *Benzoin*, foliis oblongis acuminatis ſubtus tomentoſis, racemis compoſitis longitudine foliorum.

Benjui. *Garcias ab Horto* in *Cluſii Exoticis*, p. 155.

Arbor Benzoini. *Grim* in *Ephemer. Acad. Nat. Curioſ. Dec.* 2. *Ann. I. pag.* 370. *fig.* 31. *Sylvius* in *Valentini Hiſtoria Simplicium*, *pag.* 487.

Benzuin. *Radermacher* in *Act. Societ. Bataviæ*, *vol. III. pag.* 44.

Benjamin or Benzoin. *Marſden's Hiſt. of Sumatra*, *pag.* 123.

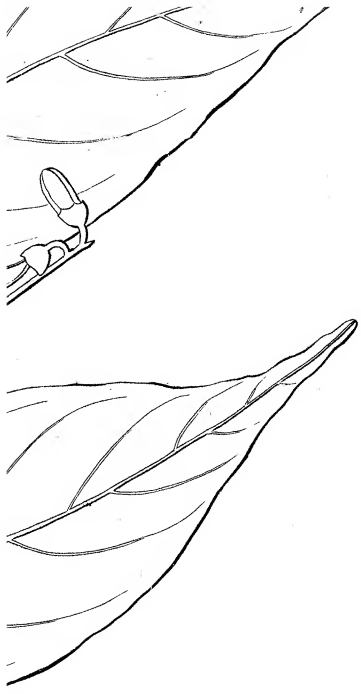
Laurus Benzoin. *Houttuyn* in *Act. Harlem. vol. XXI. pag.* 265. *tab.* 7.

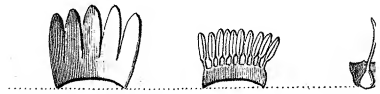
Habitat in Sumatra. ♄.

* Hort. Vindob. vol. III. p. 51.

DESCRIPTIO.

Styrax Benzoin.





Bufir

DESCRIPTIO.

Rami teretes, tomentoſi.

Folia alterna, petiolata, oblonga, integerrima, acuminata, venoſa, ſupra glabra, ſubtus tomentoſa, palmaria. *Petioli* teretes, ſtriati, canaliculati, tomentoſi, breviſſimi.

Racemi axillares, compoſiti, longitudine fere foliorum. *Pedunculi communes* tomentoſi; *partiales* alterni, patentes, tomentoſi. *Pedicelli* breviſſimi. *Flores* ſecundi.

Calyx campanulatus, obſoletiſſime quinquedentatus, extus tomentoſus, linea longior.

Petala quinque, (baſi forte connata) linearia, obtuſa, extus tomento tenuiſſimo cinerea, calyce quadruplo longiora.

Filamenta decem, receptaculo inſerta, petalis paulo breviora, inferne connata in cylindrum longitudine calycis, ſuperne infra antheras ciliata. *Antheræ* lineares, filamentis longitudinaliter adnatæ, iiſque dimidio breviores.

Germen ſuperum, ovatum, tomentoſum. *Stylus* filiformis, ſtaminibus longior. *Stigma* ſimplex.

Styrax Benzoin?